Ipsos Reid

Matching Science with Insight

GVRD Residents' Opinions- Ten-Year Transportation Outlook and Three-Year Financial Strategy

TRANSLINK

November 2003

Objectives and Methodology

- Research Objectives:
  - To assess public opinion on:
    - The importance of transportation issues.
    - Awareness and support of transportation projects.
    - Support for specific funding sources.
    - Effectiveness of communications efforts.
- Research Method:
  - Questionnaire was designed with input from a number of external stakeholders.
  - 1,000 telephone interviews with residents 16 years and older in the GVRD, November 3 to 10, 2003. Follow up to research done in March/April and October 2003. Identical methodologies used.
  - Quotas set as follows*:
    - 200 North Shore
    - 300 Central
    - 200 Northeast
    - 150 South of Fraser
    - 150 in Richmond
  - Margin of error: ±3.1%, 19 times out of 20, larger in subsets.

*Final results weighted to 2001 Census info.

Key Findings

Summary of Findings
Top-of-Mind Issues

105-01239/

- Transportation is the number one local issue at 22%. This is unchanged from October, but up 6 points from the spring. Healthcare is next highest at 21%.
- Residents in the Northeast region are most likely to cite transportation issues (29%).
- Almost one-quarter (24%) of GVRD residents think improvements to the transportation network should be a "top" priority, with and additional 64% saying it should be at least an important priority – consistently high across all areas of the GVRD and unchanged from October results.
- Congestion is, by far, the most important transportation issue. In fact, 77% of people describe congestion as a serious problem in the region. Congestion is especially problematic in the South of Fraser area (Surrey/Delta/Langley) at 85%, in the Northeast Sector (80%), and on the North Shore (81%).

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Summary of Findings
Importance of Projects

- A list of 7 major transportation projects in the 10-Year Transportation Outlook was read to residents.
- 73% say the projects are important to them personally, relatively unchanged from the spring (75%) and October (73%), slightly less in Richmond (65%).
- As in previous surveys, people see beyond their own needs and understand the importance of projects to the region.
- 92% of GVRD residents rate the projects as important to the region, relatively unchanged from the Spring 91% and October 90% and consistent across all areas (over 90% in each area).

Summary of Findings
Impact of Projects

- According to residents, the projects will have a positive impact on the region on a number of different fronts.
- Perceived positive impact of the projects will be greatest on travel times, traffic congestion, and the overall quality of life.
- Potential red flag is the impact of projects on air pollution and climate change – 22% see a negative impact from these projects, up from 16% in spring.
- The impacts of greatest importance to residents are quality of life and traffic congestion.
- Air pollution and climate change is #3 in importance among possible impacts read to GVRD residents. As the projects are not seen to have a strongly positive environmental impact, the message of enhanced environmental effects of the projects should be communicated.

Summary of Findings
Paying for Projects

- People in the GVRD generally support an "everyone pays" philosophy rather than user pay.
- Consistent with this, people support a range of funding sources making up at least a small part of the funding for the 10-Year Outlook:
  - Strongest support is for transit fares as a funding source (90% feel transit fares should make up at least a small part of major transportation project funding), parking fees 82%, electronic tolling on new roads/bridges 81%.
  - Next strongest support: gasoline taxes 75%, and property taxes 72%.
  - Least popular: electronic tolling of existing bridges/roads 61% and a per kilometer vehicle charge 61%.
- This order of popularity is similar to that found in the spring and October.

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Summary of Findings
Paying for Projects

- Funding was tested a second way in the survey, by telling people the specific impact on their pocketbooks between 2005 and 2007 of the projects in the 10-Year Transportation Outlook. Residents were informed that "to start work on these projects, the following sources of funding are suggested to be used between 2005 and 2007":
  - a transit fare increase of 6% in 2005,
  - parking tax increases in off-street paid parking region-wide in 2005 averaging 25 cents to $1 per day,
  - property tax increase in 2005 averaging $62 per homeowner,
  - and tolls on the new Fraser River Bridge.
- Right after hearing the specifics of these costs, more than two-thirds support the projects and these ways to pay for them (68%), statistically unchanged from October (69%). Support is slightly higher in Vancouver/Burnaby/New Westminster (73%) and slightly lower in Richmond (63%).
- Main reasons for support: it needs to be done, this way seems fair, costs will be shared, and the improvements will benefit everyone. Main reasons for opposition: costs and taxes are already too high.

Summary of Findings
HOV Lanes

- A series of questions on public attitudes regarding the GVRD's HOV lanes was added in the November wave.
- Almost six-in-ten people feel the HOV lanes are, in general, used according to the rules and not widely abused, with more perceived abuse of HOV lanes by those who travel most on Barnet Highway.
- Residents are split on enforcement: 46% rate the policing of the lanes as good while 42% rate the policing as poor.
- Two-thirds of residents (67%) oppose allowing large transport trucks to use the HOV lanes, with opposition strongest among those who most use Highway 1 (75%).
- Almost three-quarters of residents (72%) see the HOV lanes as a good investment of taxpayer dollars, particularly those who most use Highway 1 (78%). Reasons given: HOV lanes encourage carpooling, reduce congestion and improve traffic flow.
- The main complaint for those who see them as a bad investment: they are abused and under-used.

Summary of Findings
Costs Required for Mode Switching

- A series of questions was added for November regarding the cost levels which would induce primary transportation mode switching in residents.
- 16% of SOV travellers say they would switch to modes like transit, carpooling, cycling, motorcycling and walking if the cost of their trips increased by just 10%, with Vancouver SOVers being most likely to switch at lower cost increases.
- 60% of SOV travellers would switch if costs doubled.
- Mode to which SOV drivers would switch?
  - Bus being mentioned by more North Shore (42%), Richmond (42%), and Vancouver/Burnaby/New Westminster residents (36%);
  - SkyTrain being mentioned by more Northeast region (22%) and Vancouver/Burnaby/New Westminster residents (17%);
  - Cycling being mentioned by more Vancouver/Burnaby/New Westminster residents (14%); and,
  - SeaBus by more North Shore residents (8%).

Summary of Findings
Costs Required for Mode Switching

- Transit users are more price sensitive:
  - A 10% increase would cause 31% of users to switch modes. A doubling of costs would cause 79% to switch, with little regional variation.
- Most common mode to which transit users would switch is Single Occupant Vehicle.

Summary of Findings
Communications Effectiveness

- Awareness of the information available on the TransLink website is low at 17%, unchanged from October.
- Of these people who are aware, 15% have reviewed the financial information and 19% have visited the "Build Your Transportation Future" section. These figures are up slightly from October.
- 31% of those in the GVRD have seen, read or heard about the public meetings being held to discuss the 10-Year Transportation Outlook.
- Most common sources of awareness: The Vancouver Sun, The Province and community newspapers.

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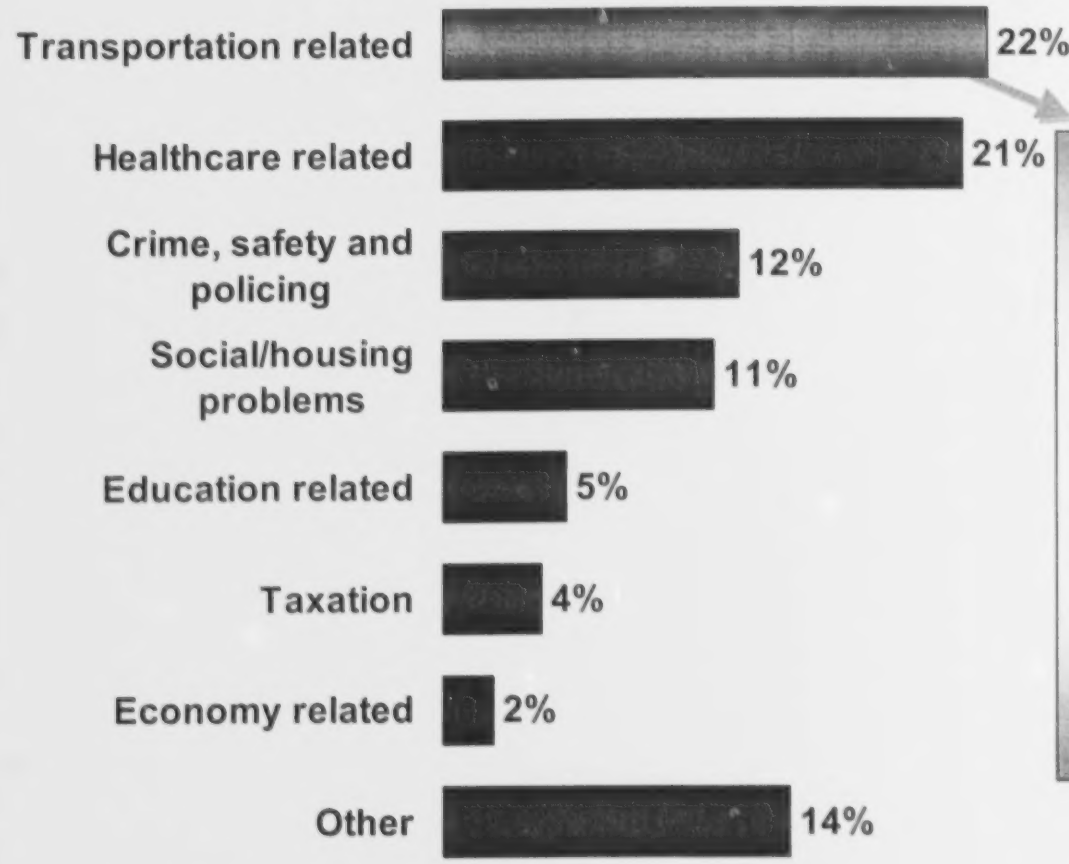
Detailed Results

Most Important *Local* Issue: Overall

In your view, what is the most important LOCAL issue facing residents of Greater Vancouver, that is, the one you feel should receive the greatest attention from municipal, provincial and federal leaders?



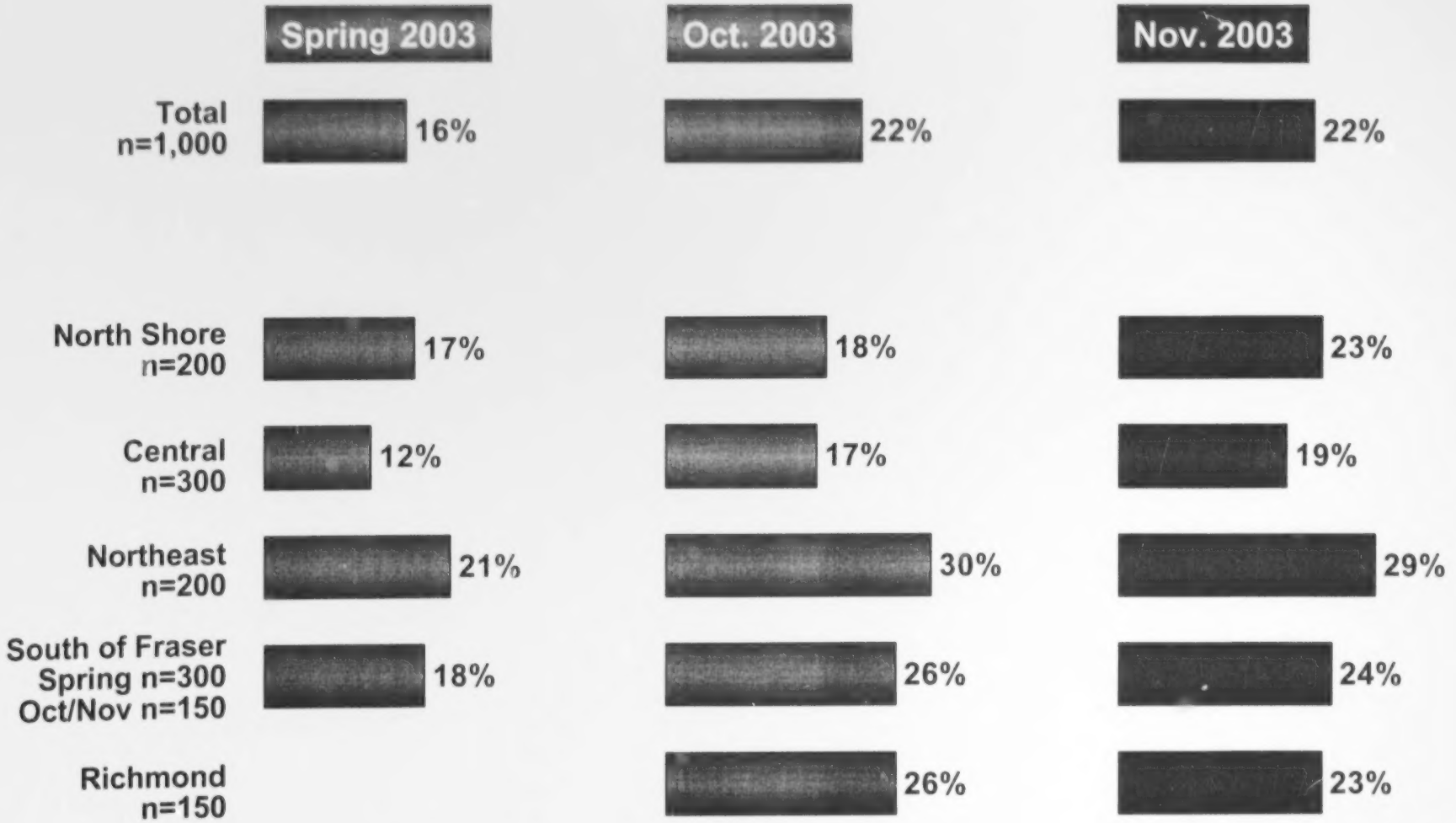
Transportation-Related Issues	November 2003	Spring 2003	Oct. 2003
Traffic congestion	8%	10%	9%
Poor quality/lack of public transit	4%	4%	14%
General/unspecified	4%	6%	7%
Lack of access in/out of community	3%	2%	3%
Condition of streets	2%	9%	4%
Lack of alternative choices	1%		
Personal security/ safety on transit	1%		
Other	1%		

Transportation related	22%	16%	22%
Healthcare related	21%	23%	18%
Crime, safety and policing	12%		
Social/housing problems	11%		
Education related	5%		
Taxation	4%		
Economy related	2%		
Other	14%	19%	15%

n=1,000

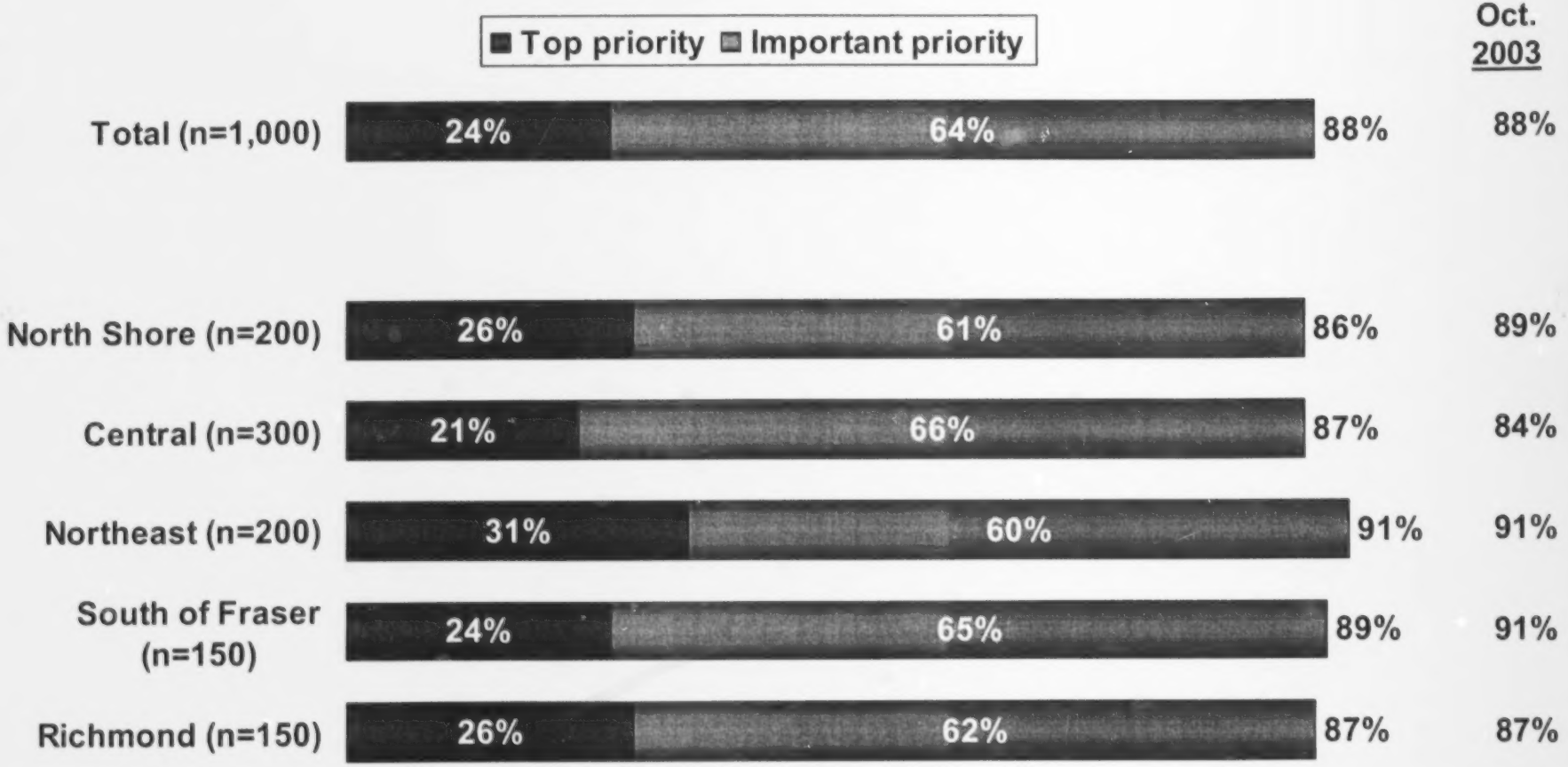
Most Important Local Issue: Transportation

*Percentage of Respondents Citing **Transportation** as the Most Important Local Issue*



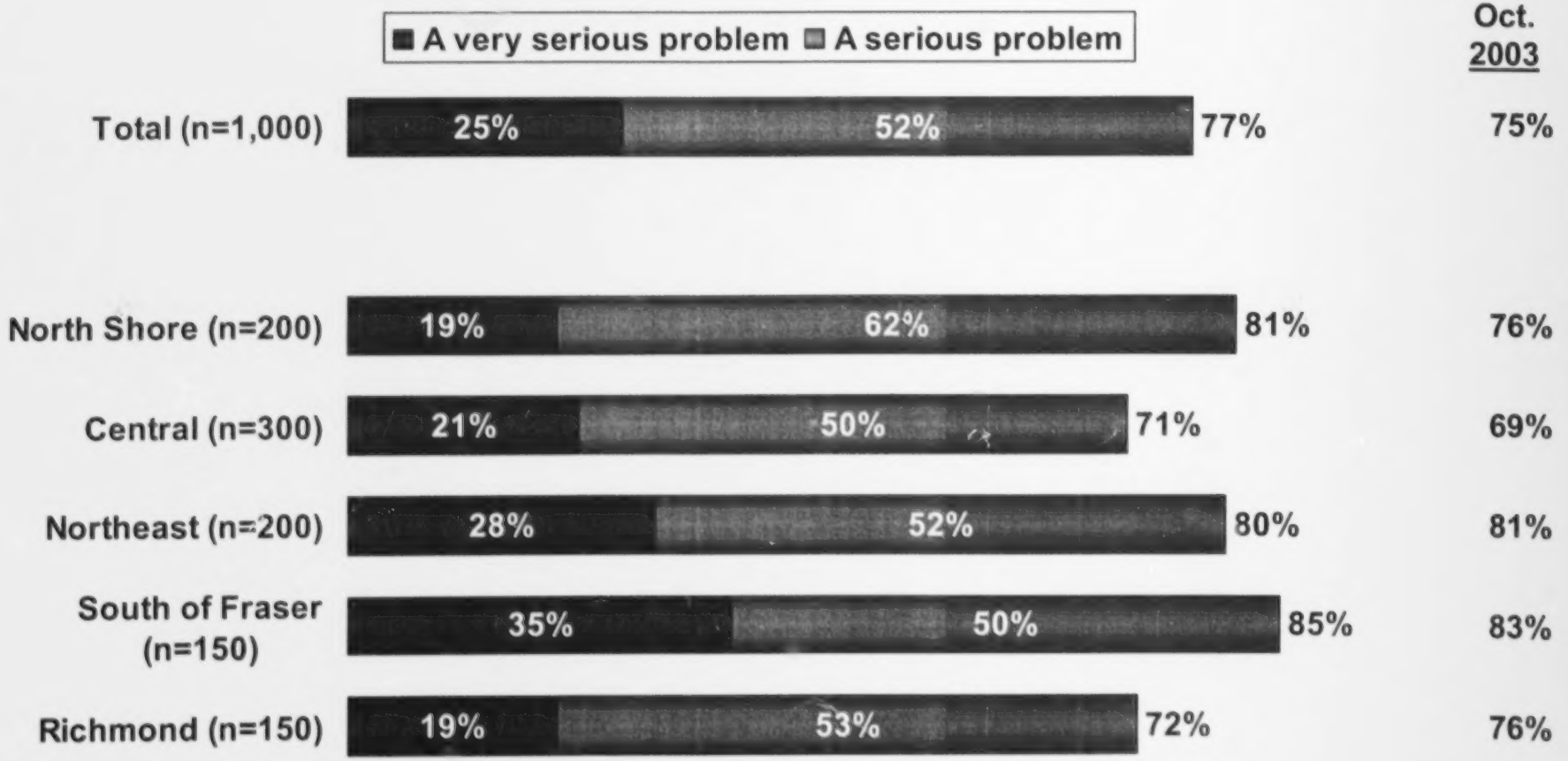
Priority of Transportation Issues – November, 2003

Thinking of the local issues facing residents of Greater Vancouver, how much of a priority do you think municipal, provincial and federal leaders should place on making major improvements to Greater Vancouver's road, bridge and transit network?



Traffic Congestion – November, 2003

How would you describe traffic congestion in an average week in Greater Vancouver? Would you say it is …?

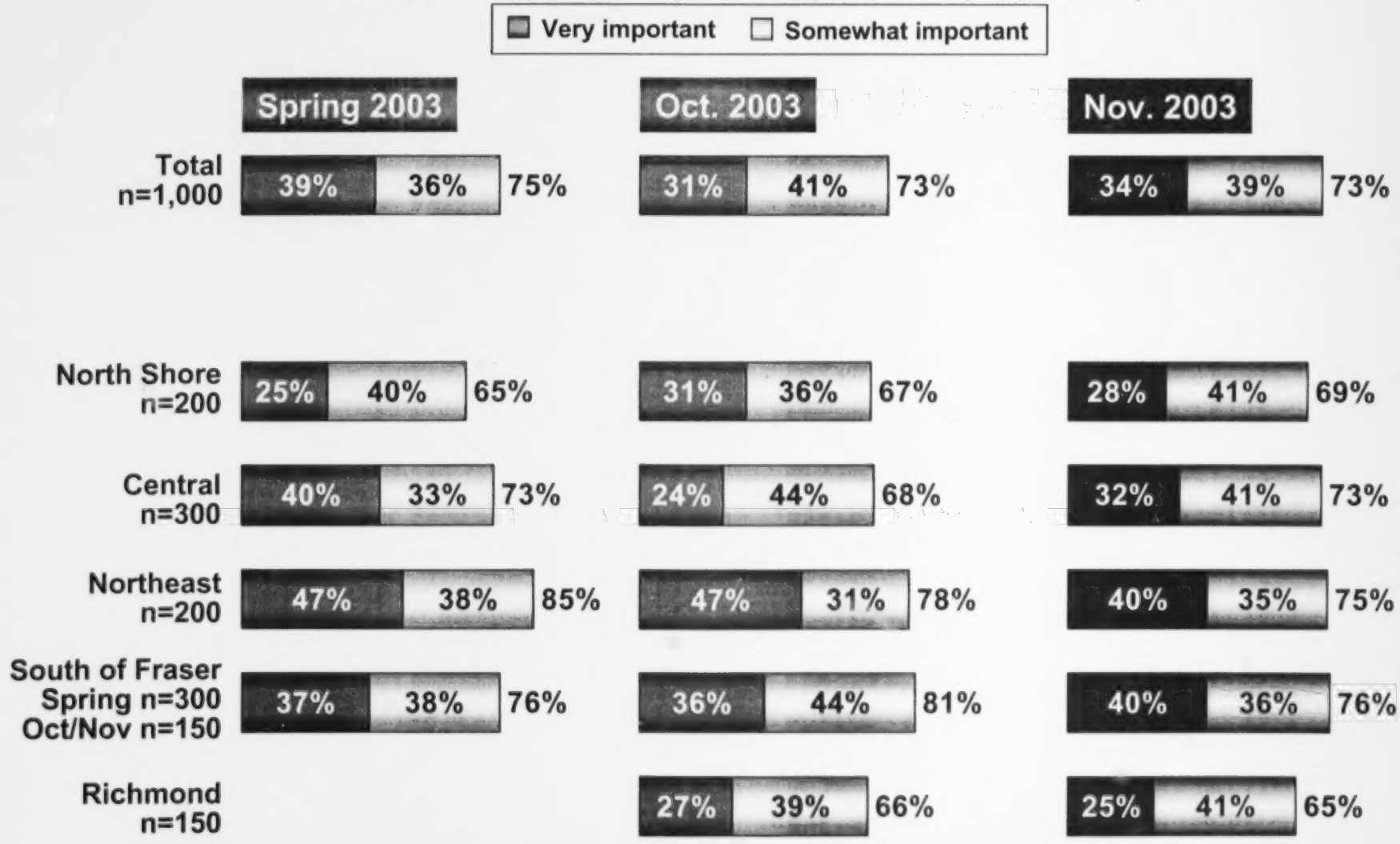


Major Transportation Projects List Read to Residents

- The following list of major transportation projects was read out to respondents:
  - A rapid rail line from Coquitlam Town Centre to Lougheed Mall SkyTrain Station.
  - The Richmond-Airport-Vancouver rapid rail transit project.
  - A new SeaBus and 7 new passenger only ferries on the Burrard Inlet and English Bay.
  - 600 million dollars for a new bridge across the Fraser River between Langley and Maple Ridge.
  - 220 million dollars on road projects including the North Fraser Perimeter Road in New Westminster, Fraser Highway widening in Surrey, Dollarton Bridge Twinning and Main Street widening in North Van.
  - Expanding the bus system by one-third more buses over the next ten years including the expansion of community mini-buses into a number of communities, replacement of the 20-year old electric trolleys with wheelchair accessible trolleys, expansion of HandyDART vehicles and new B-Line bus service between Guildford, Surrey Centre and Newton.
  - Doubling the investment in cycling facilities and cycling paths.

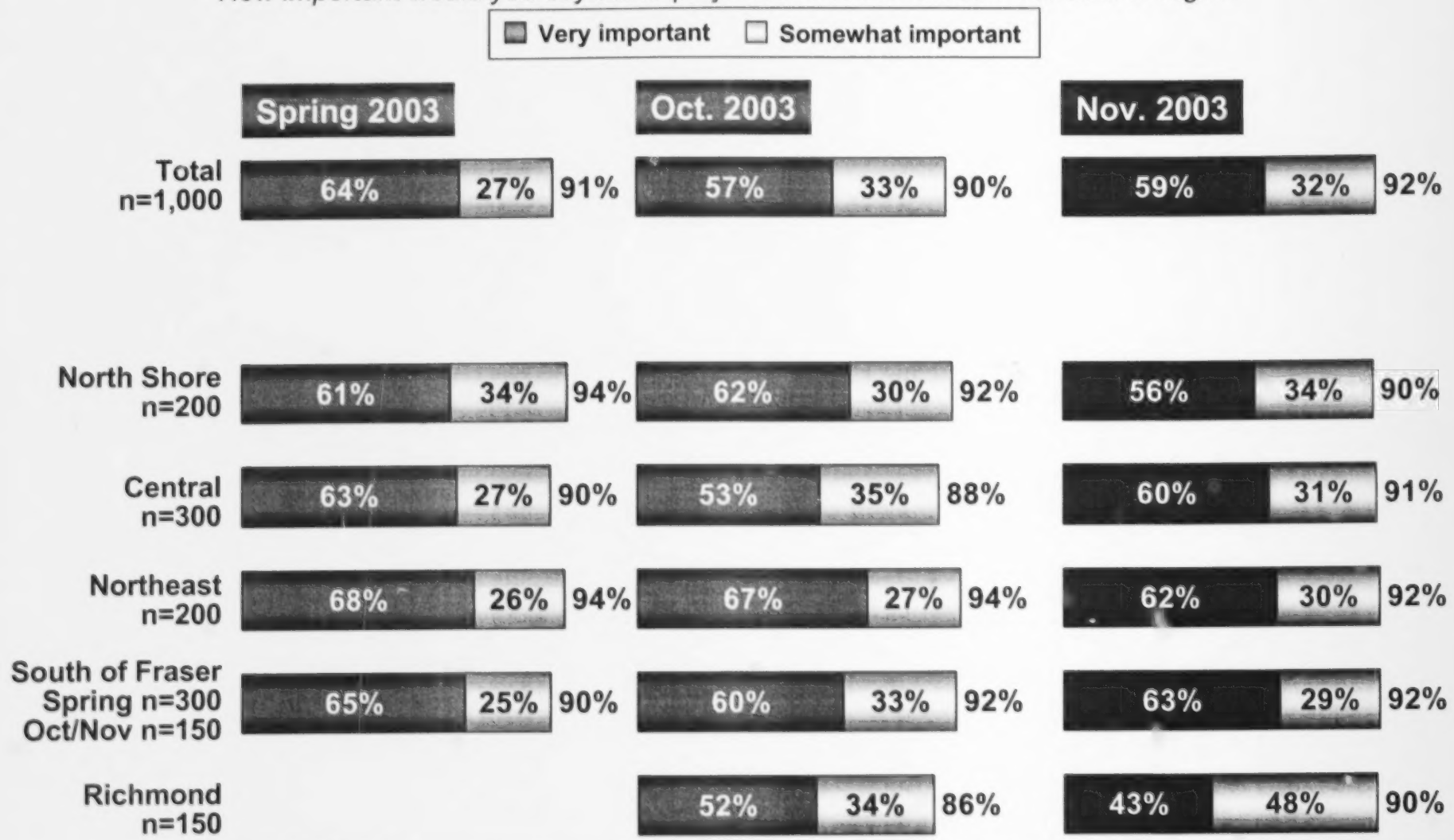
Importance of Projects to You Personally

How important would you say these projects are to you personally?



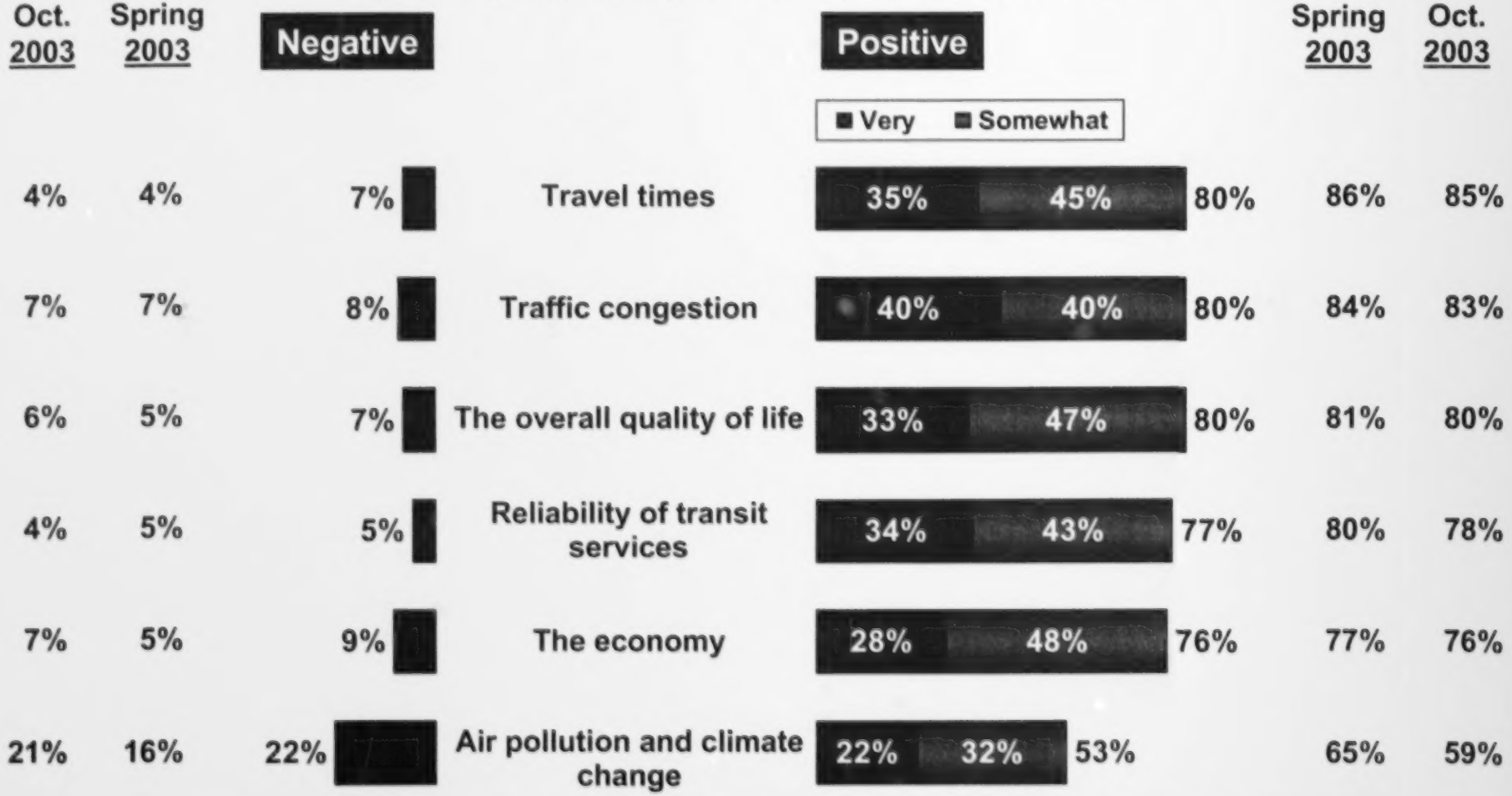
Importance of Projects to Region

How important would you say these projects are to the Greater Vancouver region?



Impact of Transportation Improvements – November 2003 –

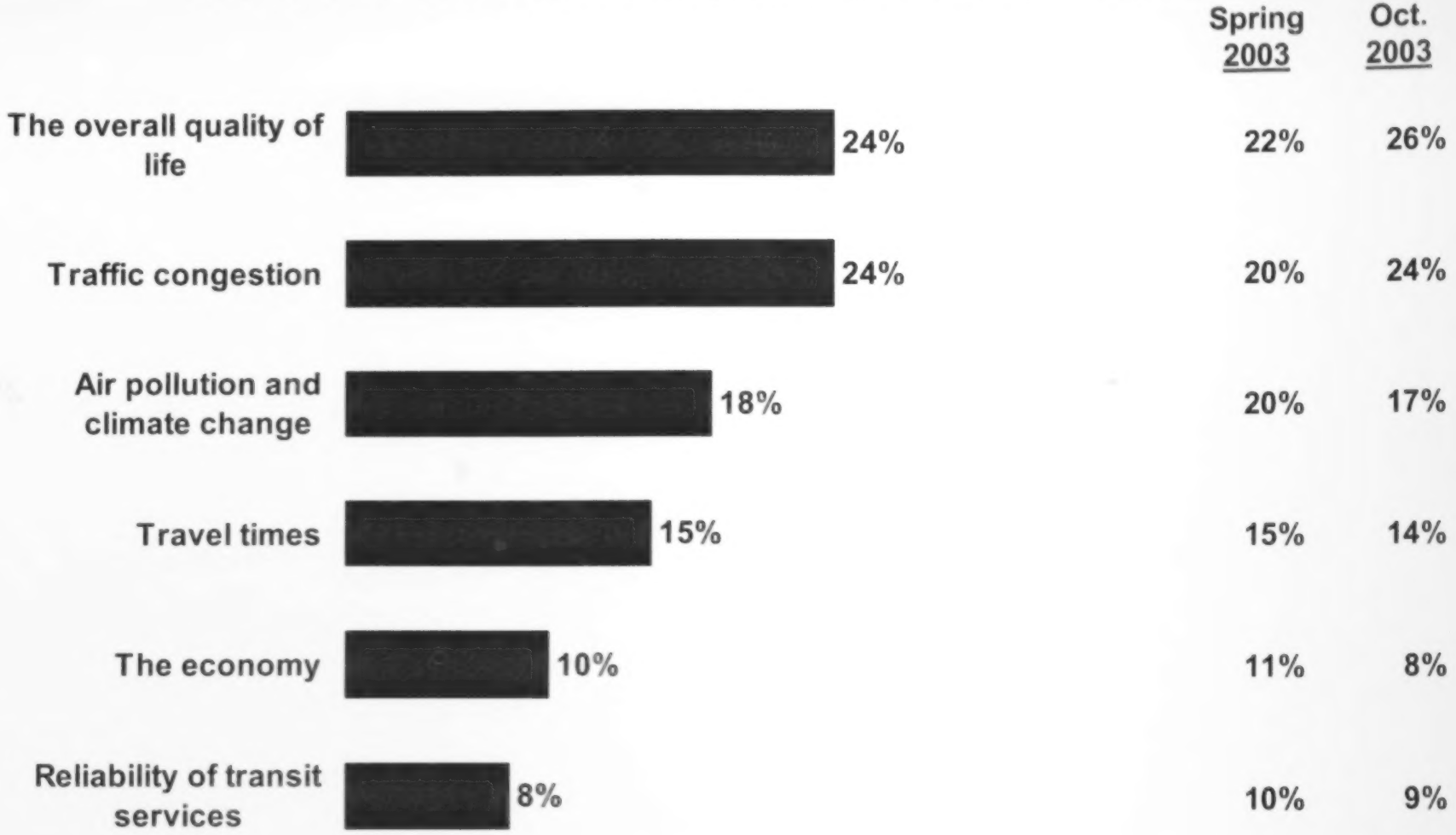
We've just talked about a number of different transportation projects. If these transportation projects go ahead, do you think they will have a very positive impact, somewhat positive impact, somewhat negative impact, very negative impact or no impact on … in the region?


Oct. 2003
Spring 2003
Negative
Positive
Spring 2003
Oct. 2003
Very
Somewhat
4% 4% 7% Travel times 35% 45% 80% 86% 85%
7% 7% 8% Traffic congestion 40% 40% 80% 84% 83%
6% 5% 7% The overall quality of life 33% 47% 80% 81% 80%
4% 5% 5% Reliability of transit services 34% 43% 77% 80% 78%
7% 5% 9% The economy 28% 48% 76% 77% 76%
21% 16% 22% Air pollution and climate change 22% 32% 53% 65% 59%

n=1,000

Impact of Greatest Importance – November 2003 –

And, which ONE of these impacts is of greatest importance to you? Is it …?



n=1,000

Paying for Projects

Now, I'd like to turn to the issue of paying for the types of projects we have discussed. Some/Other people say that everyone should pay for transportation projects. These people argue that transportation is like education and health care. We all pay because it provides a benefit to society as a whole and not just those who use the system. Some/Other people say that transportation projects should be paid for only by the people who use the transit, roads and bridges. These people argue that transportation is just like any other goods or service that we pay for by use.

Funding Sources

I'm going to read you a number of different funding sources. As I read each one, please tell me whether you feel that source should make up a large part of the funding, a medium-sized part, a small part, or no part of the funding for major transportation projects.

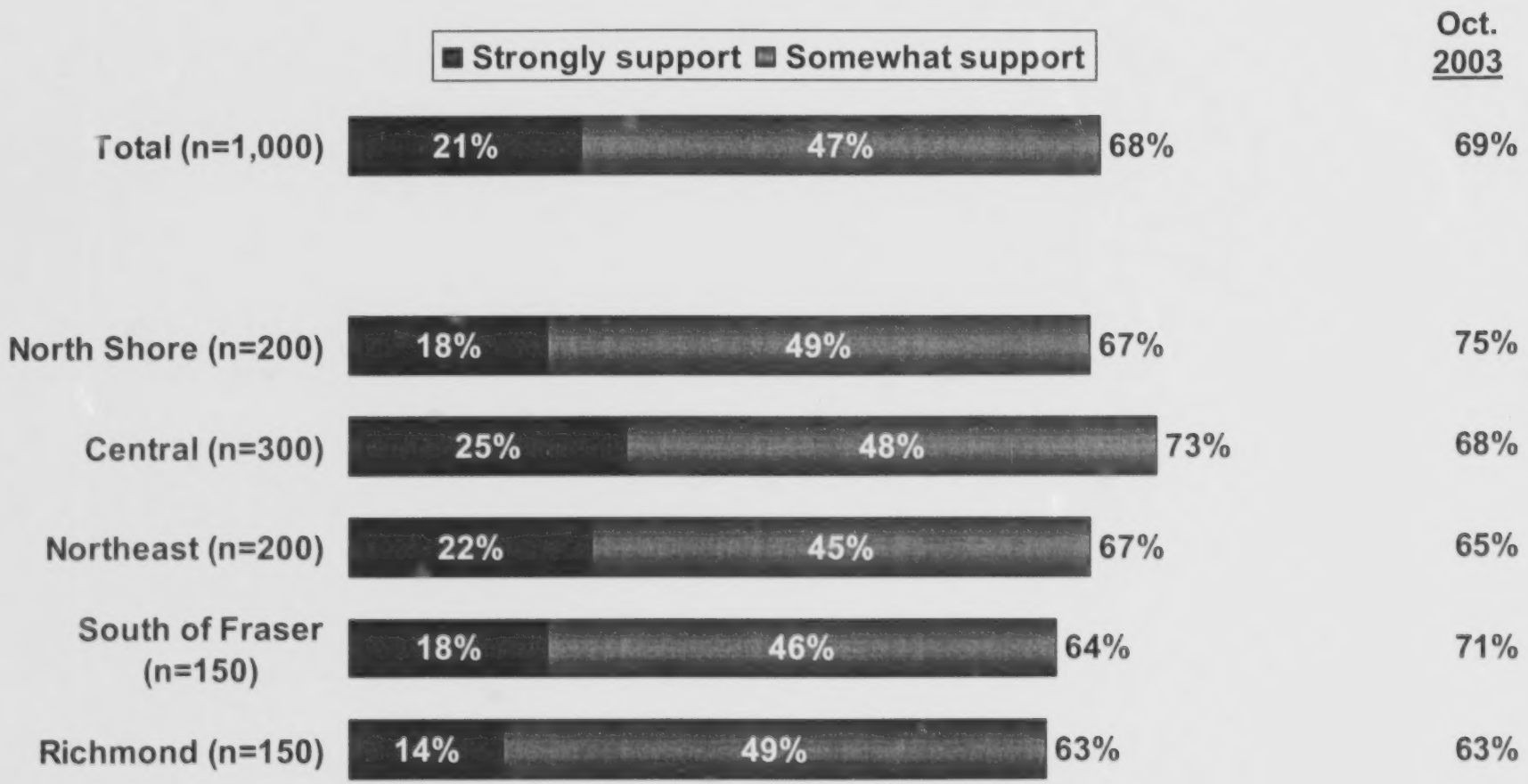
		Some Part %	Large %	Medium %	Small %	No %
Transit fares	Nov. 2003	90	28	35	27	10
	Oct. 2003	90	26	36	28	10
	Spring 2003	91	26	42	23	7
Electronic tolling on new bridges/roads	Nov. 2003	81	29	30	22	19
	Oct. 2003	80	25	30	25	19
	Spring 2003	82	24	35	23	15
Parking fees	Nov. 2003	82	17	31	34	17
	Oct. 2003	79	16	28	35	20
	Spring 2003	82	17	32	33	16
Gasoline taxes	Nov. 2003	75	21	29	25	23
	Oct. 2003	74	19	26	29	26
	Spring 2003	71	20	23	28	27
Property taxes	Nov. 2003	72	10	25	37	27
	Oct. 2003	70	6	23	41	29
	Spring 2003	74	9	30	35	25
Electronic tolling on existing bridges/roads	Nov. 2003	61	15	21	25	39
	Oct. 2003	62	11	24	27	37
	Spring 2003	59	11	21	27	39
Vehicle charge for kilometers driven	Nov. 2003	61	14	19	28	38
	Oct. 2003	59	12	21	26	40
	Spring 2003	59	12	22	25	38

Specific $ Impact on Pocketbook

- Funding was tested in a second way toward the end of the poll.
- Residents were informed of the total impact in dollars and cents, on their pocketbooks between 2005 and 2007, of the projects in the 10-Year Plan. Residents were told that "to start work on these projects, the following sources of funding are suggested to be used between 2005 and 2007":
  - a transit fare increase of 6% in 2005,
  - parking taxes increase in 2005 in off-street paid parking lots region-wide averaging 25 cents to $1 per day,
  - property tax increase in 2005 averaging $62 per homeowner,
  - and tolls on the new Fraser River Bridge.
- They were then asked:
  "Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose making the transportation improvements I just read to you using these funding sources?"

Support for Funding Sources Immediately After Learning Specific $ Impact on Pocketbooks

Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose making the transportation improvements I just read to you using these funding sources?



Reasons For Supporting Funding Sources

Why do you say you support making the improvements using these funding sources?

	Support the Transportation Improvements n=683 %
It has to be done; has to be paid for	36
A fair/reasonable way to pay for the projects; makes sense	18
Costs will be shared by the community; everyone will contribute	15
Improved transit affects/benefits everyone in the community	13
Those who use the services will pay (most) for them	9
Spreads out expenses/doesn't target one group	9
Reduce congestion/improve travel times	8

Reasons For Opposing Funding Sources

Why do you say you oppose making the improvements using these funding sources?

	Oppose the Transportation Improvements n=309 %
Costs/taxes already too high	28
Property taxes are too high/don't want an increase in tax	10
Money should come out of existing funds	8
Money should come from federal/provincial governments	8
Fees should be limited to the user	8
Can't trust the government to use the funding properly	8
Harder on lower income people/increases would cause more poverty	7
Don't agree with bridge/road tolls	7
Property tax has nothing to do with transportation	5

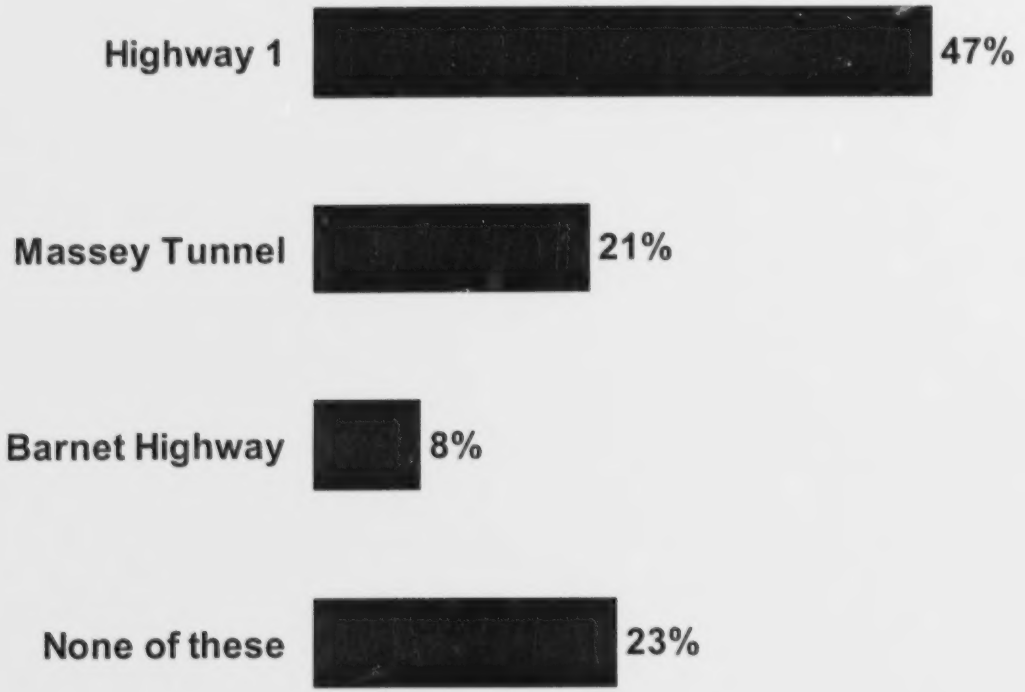
Funding Sources Particularly Oppose

Are there any of the funding sources we have just described that you particularly oppose?

	Oppose the Transportation Improvements n=309 %
Property taxes would increase in 2005 by $20 per $100,000 in property value	37
Tolls will be charged on the new Fraser River bridge	19
Parking charges in off-street parking lots that currently charge for parking would increase region-wide in 2005 with no further increase until after 2007	18
Transit fares increase an average of 6 percent in 2005	15
Gasoline tax	8
All of them	4
Other	4
None	23
Don't know	2

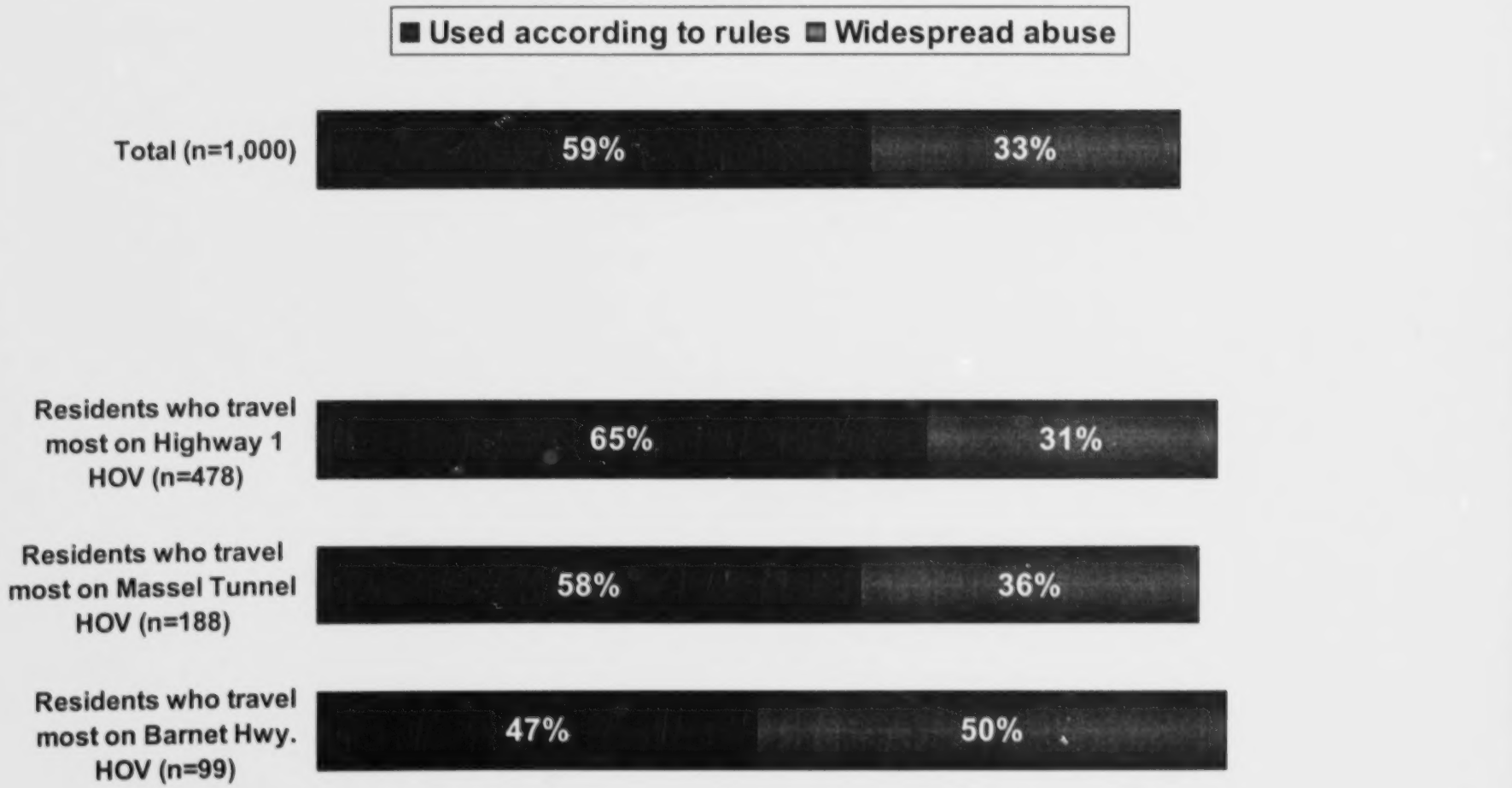
HOV Routes Travelled Most Often

Now, I'd like you to think about High Occupancy Vehicle or HOV lanes that allow a driver with one or more passengers to use a traffic lane and travel more quickly: for example, the HOV lanes on the Barnet Highway, Highway 1 or the Massey Tunnel. Which one of these three highways, if any, do you travel on most often?



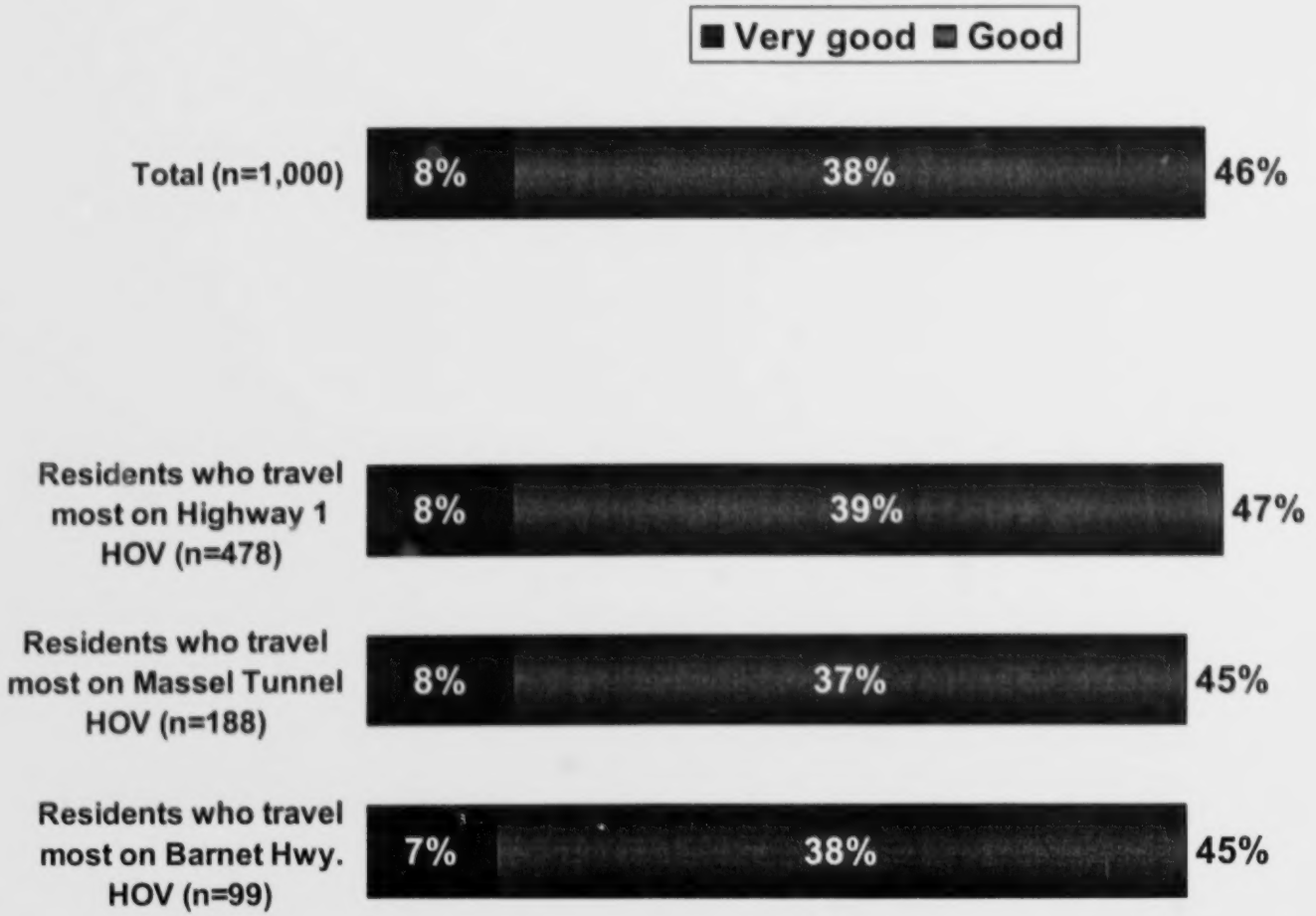
Use of HOV Lanes

Would you say that these HOV lanes are generally used according to the rules by drivers with one or more passengers, or would you say that there is widespread abuse of HOV lanes by people driving alone in a vehicle?



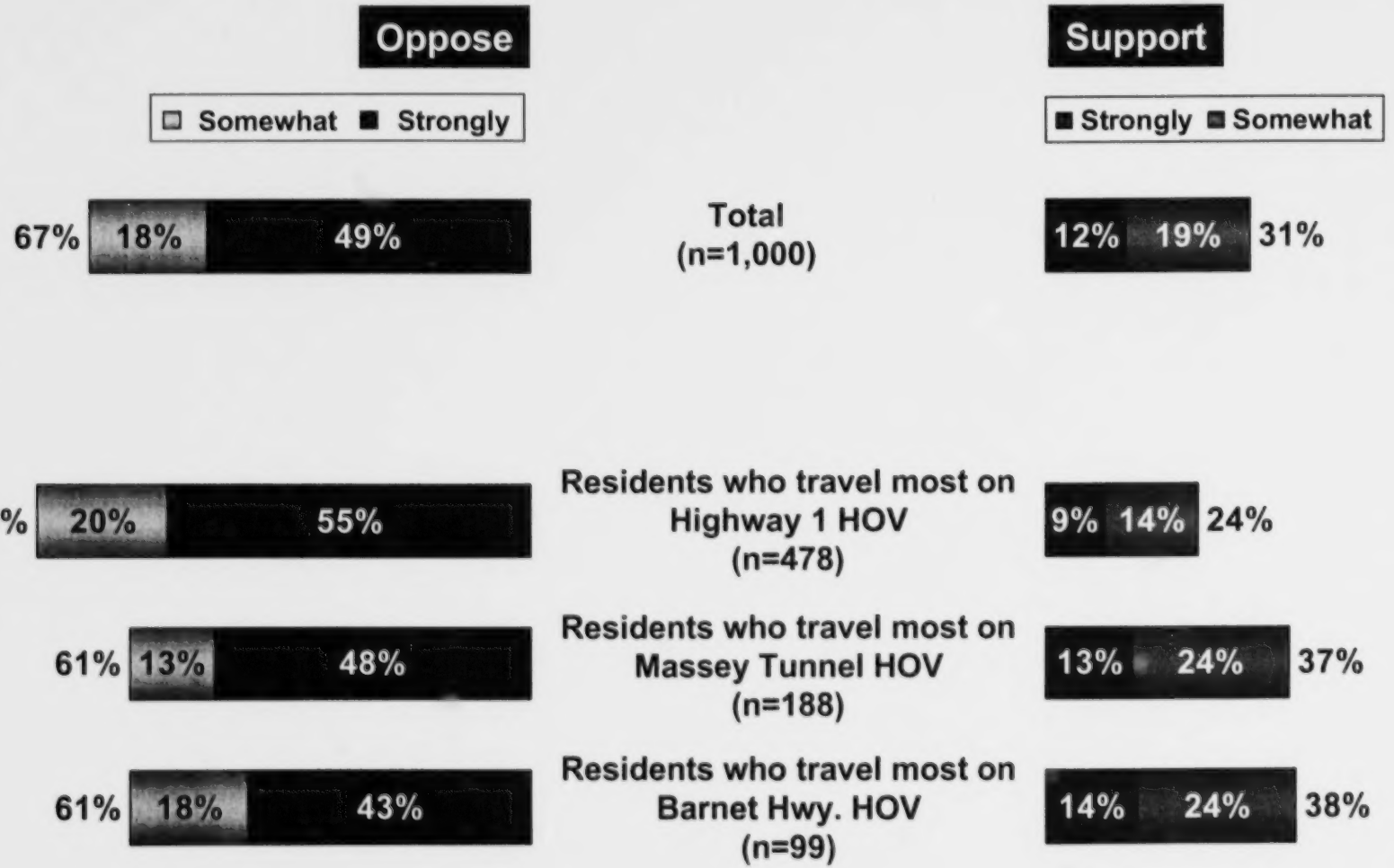
Policing of HOV Lanes

How adequate is the policing of HOV lanes to ensure that vehicles with more than one occupant are using them? Would you say the policing is very good, good, poor or very poor?



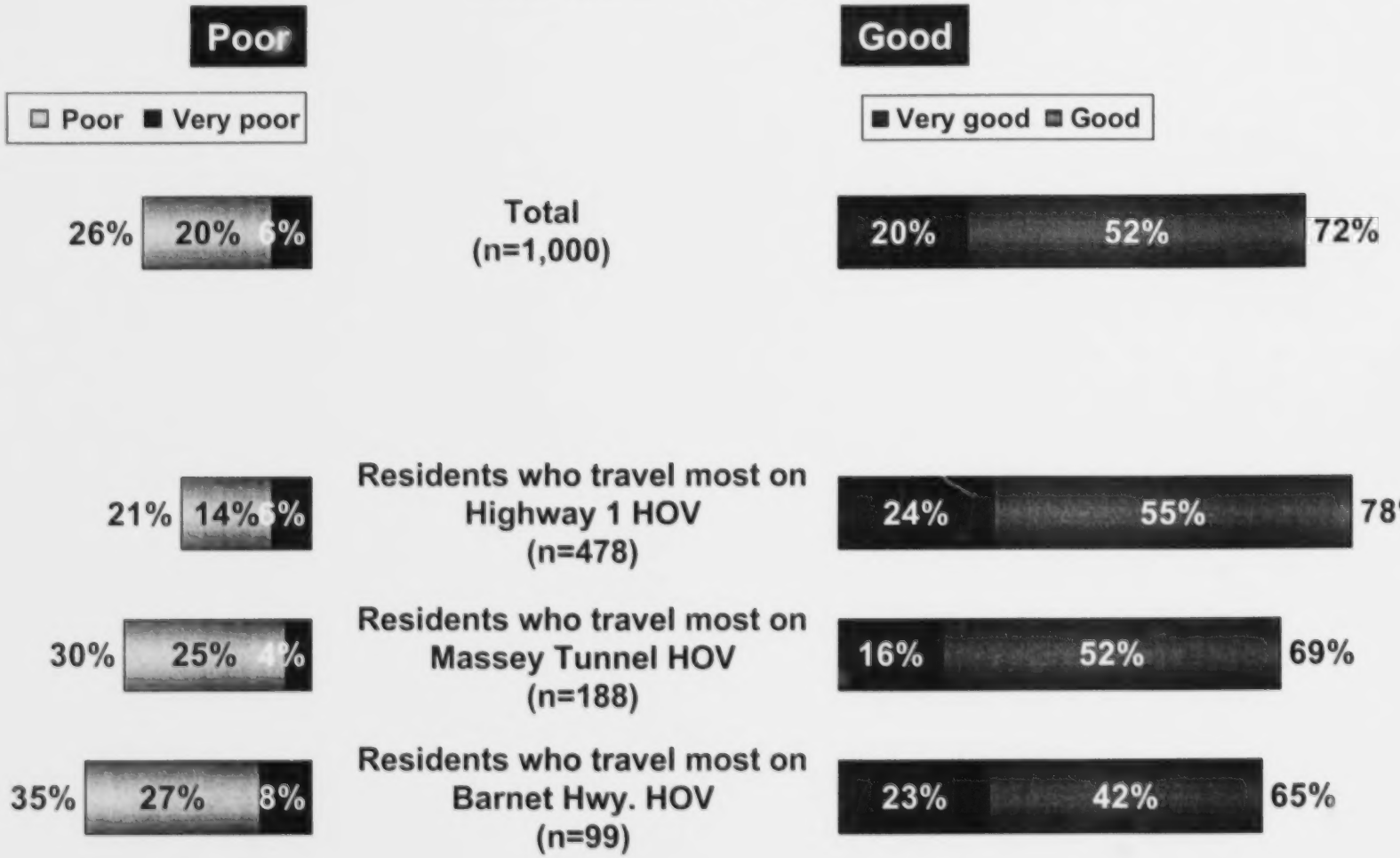
Transport Trucks on HOV Lanes

Do you support or oppose allowing large transport trucks to use HOV lanes?



Investment of Taxpayer Dollar in HOVs

In your opinion, are HOV lanes a very good investment, good investment, a poor investment, or a very poor investment of taxpayer dollars?



Reasons For HOVs Lanes as a Good Investment

Why do you say that HOV lanes are a good investment?

	HOVs Lanes Are a Good Investment n=720 %
Encourages car pooling	43
Better traffic flow; less congestion	22
Faster, get you to your destination quickly, easily	18
Agree with them (like them)	17
Highway 1	14
Speeds up traffic/saves time	14
I and people I know use them (they work, etc.)	12
Good for the environment, creates less pollution	9
Fewer cars on the road	9
Highway 99	3
Barnett Highway	3

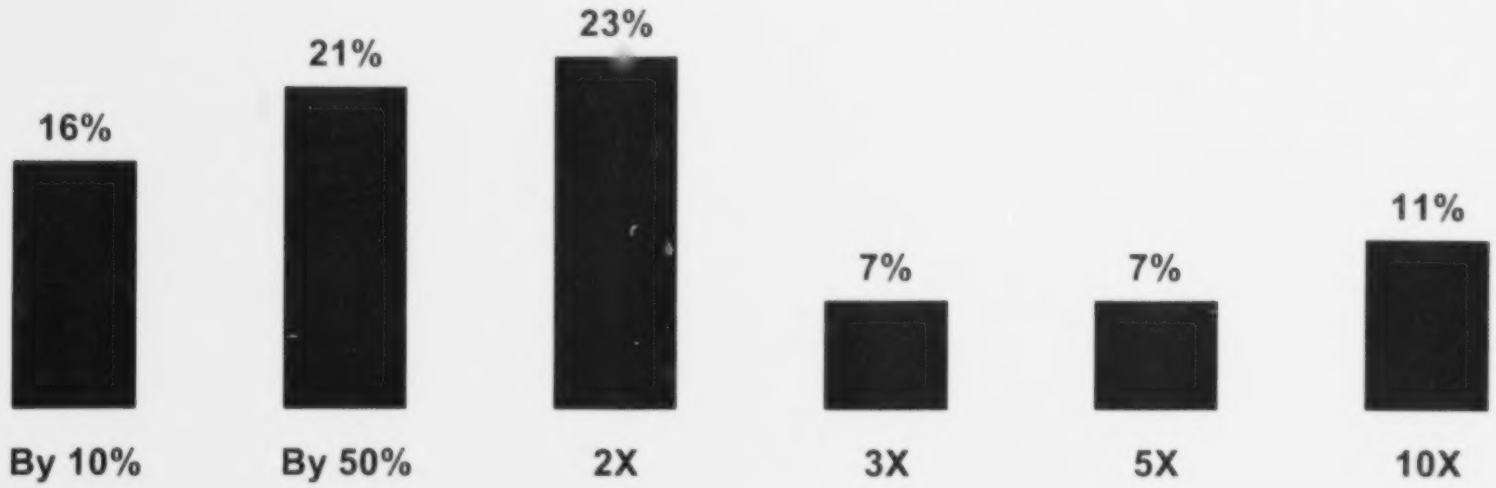
Reasons For HOVs Lanes as a Bad Investment

Why do you say that HOV lanes are a poor investment?

	HOVs Lanes Are a Bad Investment n=259 %
They are abused, misused	40
Under-used/nobody travel on them	23
Highway 1	15
Don't work; don't speed up traffic, don't encourage car pooling	14
Few people carpool/most vehicles have only one person	11
Too expensive; money can be used for better things	11
Not enforced properly	9
Cause congestion; hard to get on/off	7
Massey Tunnel	4
Lane should be used for trucks	3
Gives some people special privileges	3
Agree with them (like them, etc.)	3

Cost Increase Required to Switch From Car, Van, Truck Commuting

Now I'd like to ask you about the cost of commuting by car, van or truck. The costs of driving a private vehicle include gas, insurance, parking and routine maintenance, together with the original purchase price of the vehicle. How much would these costs have to increase for you to consider using the car less and using other transportation modes like transit, car pooling, cycling, motorcycling and walking more?
Would the cost of gas, insurance, parking, maintenance, and the original purchase price of the a car have to increase …?



n=638, Use SOV as a mode of transportation

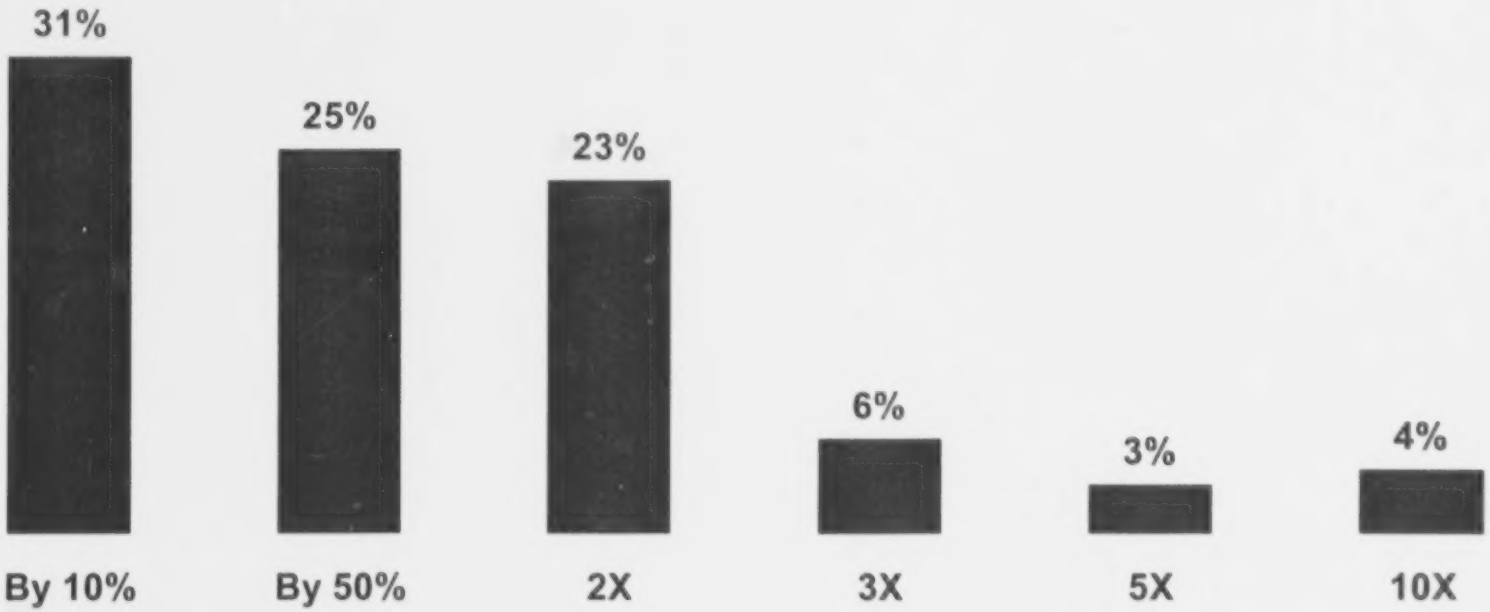
Mode of Transportation Most Likely to Use if Driving Costs Increased

Which mode of transportation would you be most likely to use if the costs of driving increased?

	Use SOV as a Mode of Transportation n=638 %
Bus	31
Public transit (unspecified)	23
SkyTrain	15
Car/truck/personal vehicle (drive)	11
Bicycle	9
Walk/run	9
Car pool	5
Motorcycle	5
No choice/have to stay the same	3
Taxicab	2
SeaBus	1
Other	4

Cost Increase Which Would Force a Switch From Transit Use

Now I'd like to ask you about the costs of transit. How much would transit costs have to increase for you to consider using transit less and using a private vehicle, car pooling, cycling or walking more? Would the costs of transit have to increase …?



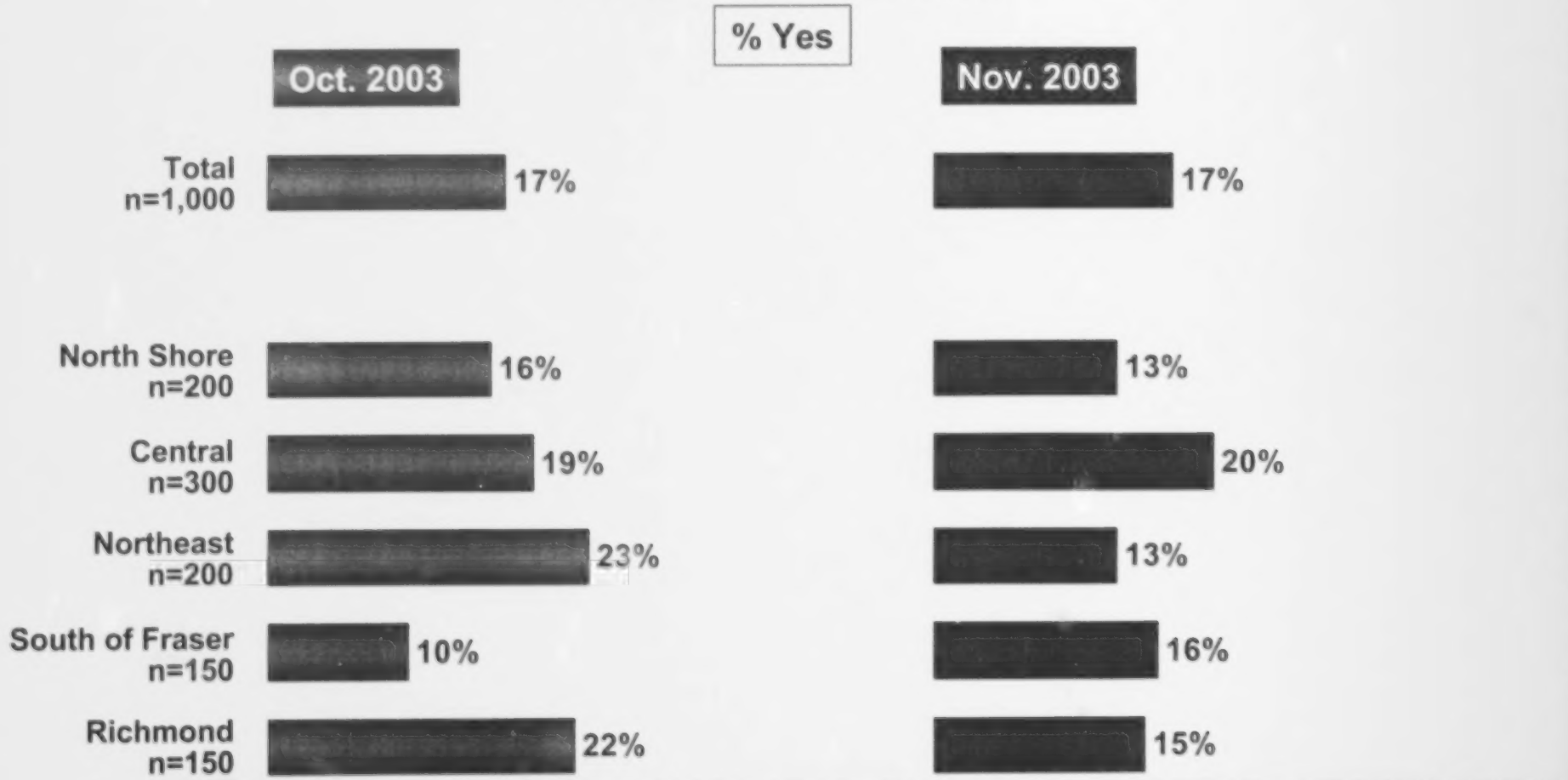
Mode of Transportation Most Likely to Use if Transit Costs Increased

Which mode of transportation would you be most likely to use if the costs of taking transit increased?

	Use Transit as a Mode of Transportation n=331 %
Car/truck/personal vehicle (drive)	50
Bicycle	13
Walk/run	12
Bus	8
SkyTrain	7
Car pool	6
Public transit (unspecified)	4
No choice/have to stay the same	2
Motorcycle	2
Taxicab	1
Other	1

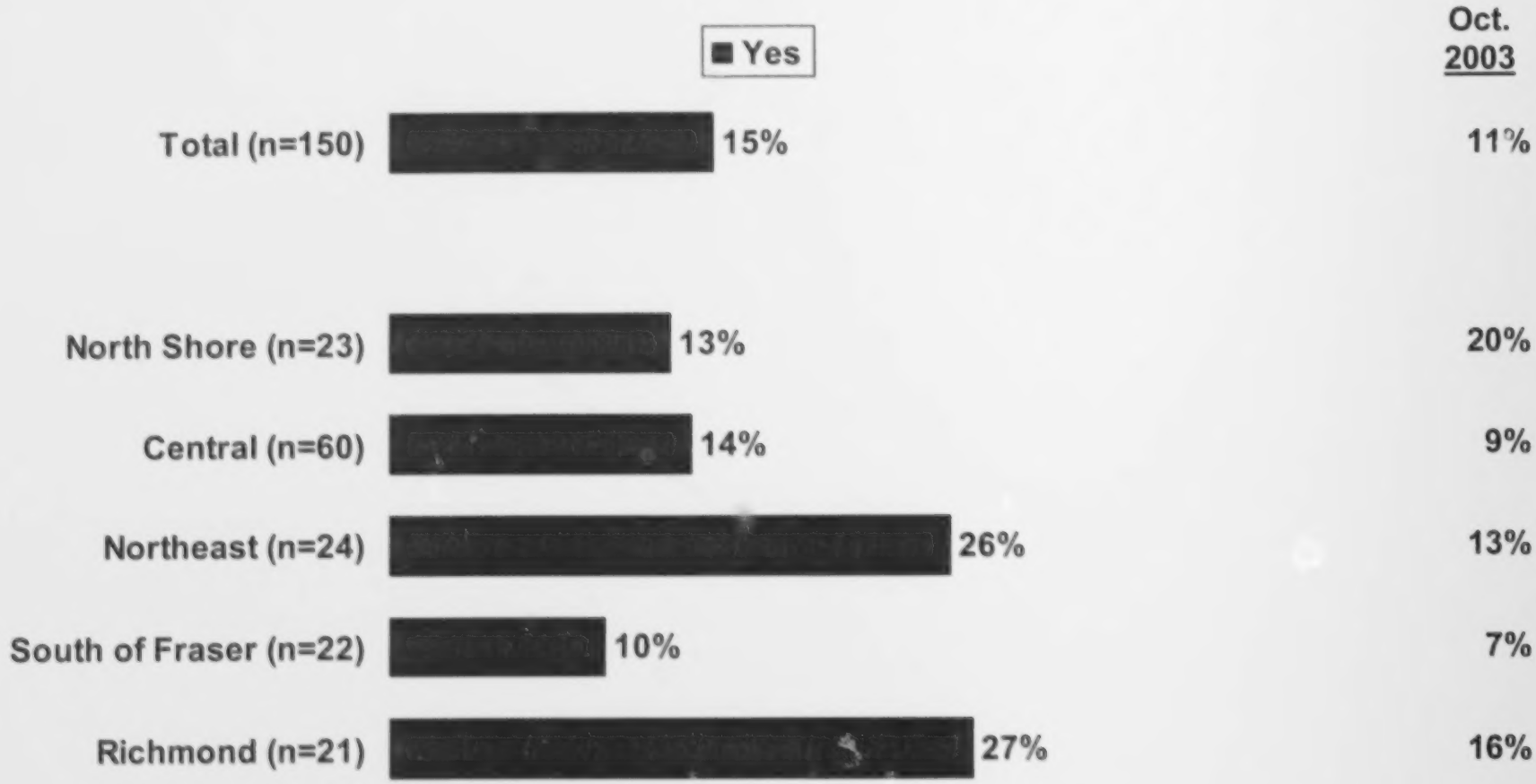
Awareness of Information on TransLink Website

The Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority provides complete financial information in their annual report which is available on their website at www.translink.bc.ca. In addition, the website has an interactive section that allows you to design your own transportation future and send in your plan to TransLink. Did you know this information was available to you?



Visited Financial Information on TransLink Website

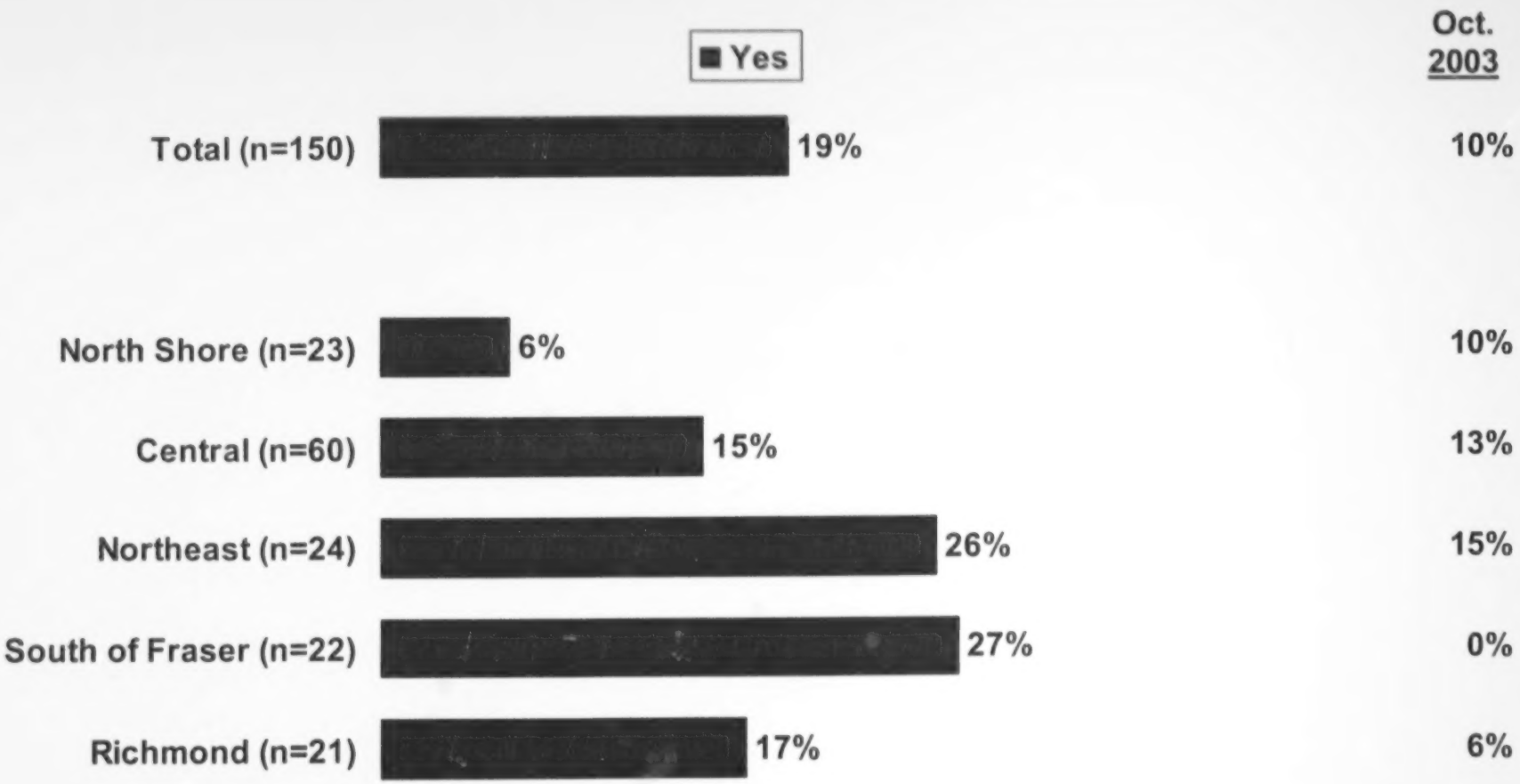
Have you ever reviewed the financial information available at the TransLink website?



Base: Those aware of the information available on the TransLink Website.
Note: Small base sizes <100, interpret with caution.

Visited Build Your Transportation Future on TransLink Website

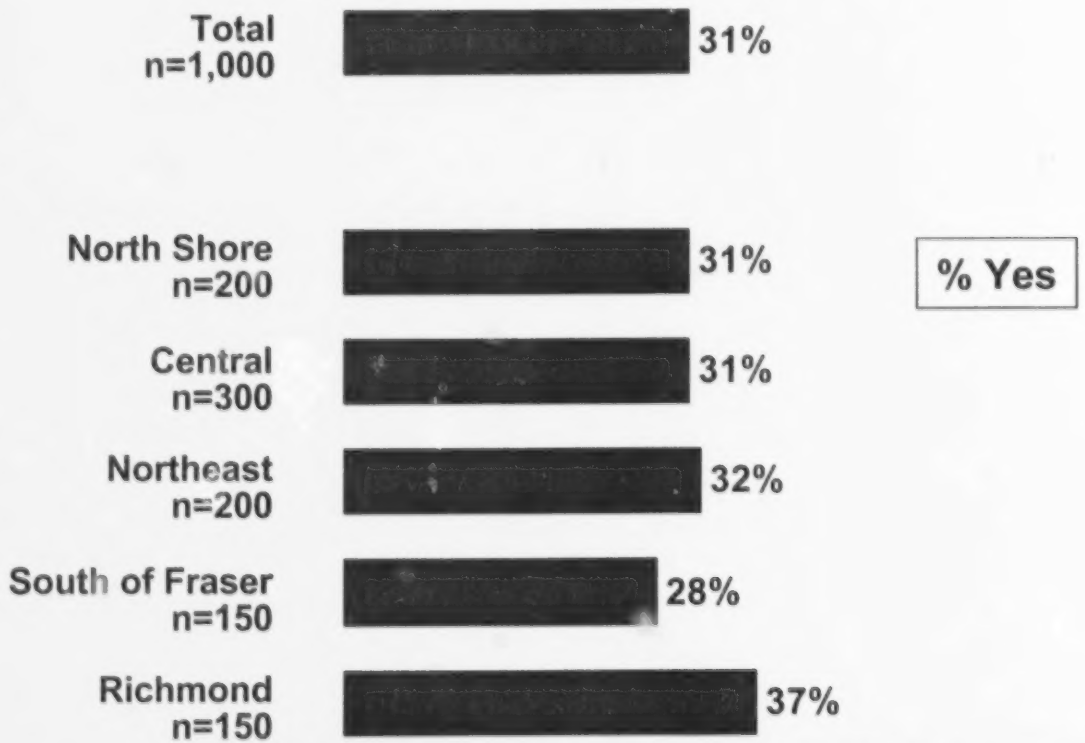
Have you visited the Build Your Transportation Future section for designing your own transportation future?



Base: Those aware of the information available on the TransLink Website.
Note: Small base sizes <100, interpret with caution.

Aware of 10-year Transportation Outlook Public Meetings

The Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority,TransLink, has proposed a 10-year Transportation Outlook for major improvements to roads and cycling facilities, a new Fraser River bridge and other bridge improvements, new ferry and bus service and rapid transit in the region. A series of public meetings are being held to discuss the 10-Year Transportation Outlook. The meetings are being publicized on drive time radio, on TV, on TransLink's website and in a colour newspaper insert that asks the question What will it be like getting around Vancouver in 2013. Have you recently seen, read or heard anything about the meetings to discuss the 10-Year Transportation Outlook?



Where Heard About 10-year Transportation Outlook Public Meetings

Were did you see, read or hear about the meetings to discuss the 10-year Transportation Outlook advertised with the question 'What will it be like getting around Greater Vancouver in 2013'?

	Residents Who Heard/ Read of the 10-Year Outlook n=325 %
The Vancouver Sun	25
The Province	18
Community newspaper	18
CKNW	9
BCTV News	7
CBC Radio	6
CanWest Global News	5